

## **CONTESTATION BETWEEN GLOBAL AND LOCAL IN MANGGARAI RAP MUSIC**

Ans. Prawati Yuliantari  
STKIP Santo Paulus, Ruteng-Manggarai  
tia.yuliantari@gmail.com

Globalization causes the spread of pop culture beyond geographical boundaries. Rap music as a form of pop culture spread around the world in the 1990s through the mass media that was driven by the transnational music industry. Its popularity was not just happened in big cities, but in peripheral regions like in Manggarai of East Nusa Tenggara as well.

This article uses the transnational concept in American studies and theory of landscape advanced by Arjun Appadurai. The concept of Transnational American Studies is used to analyze the influence of American culture beyond its territory, while the theory of landscape is used to analyze the conflicts that occurred between the global and the local rap music in Manggarai music spaces.

This analysis shows that the process of appropriation carried out by local rapper against global rap music is a form of negotiation to adapt to local tastes as well as of creativity to face global music. The strategies undertaken in the struggle for spaces of music can be seen in the form of themes, language, dialect, or mode of production. Contestation between the global and the local is always transformed through the development of music consumers in the area.

**Keywords:** Contestation, Rap, Transnational, Globalization

### **Introduction**

Globalization that happened in the twentieth century led to the development of transnational relations which is encouraged by the progress of information technology through the mass media and the Internet. Music as a product of pop culture has spread beyond conventional geographical boundaries by the media and internet technology. These transnational music industries cause conflicts between global and local music in the local music spaces.

United States controls ninety percents of world music product through several international recording corporations (Negus, 2004). A genre that popular in the late 1980s throughout the world was rap. The music which is coming from the urban

black culture in the Bronx United States has appropriated as a result of differences of the socio-cultural background with the affected countries (Motley & Henderson, 2008). American rap appropriation in many countries become an integral part of the global rap and emerged as a diaspora form of expression. Rap which was originally part of the American culture of the black community to resist the hegemony of the dominant culture (Lipsitz, 2004; Rose, 1994), turned into a means of displaying solidarity among young people and a form of local identity.

Rap music to be known in Manggarai in 2008. The attraction of the music elements (sonic) and local themes made rap music popular among young people of Manggarai. Those localities can be seen from the title of the song that talks about

the region or use Manggarai language such as: "Ruteng is da City", "Wa Mai Tana", and "We are Ruteng Clan".

Rap together with other genres such as punk and hard rock attract young people in Indonesia in the 1990s as an alternative music from the domination of Indonesian pop music with its love themes (Bodden, 2005a; Wallach, 2003). The popularity of rap music attracted and draw criticism from various party such as B.J. Habibie, who served as Minister of Research and Technology at the time, said that rap music is rough and not in accordance with the values of the nation (Bodden, 2005a), while for the rapper, rap music was considered suitable to convey the aspirations to the government which was controlled by New Order regime. Rap became a medium to convey the aspirations of young people, at the same time a weapon of protest and expression of social desirability, or simultaneously both, in order to create distinction of environmental and social identity and reject the identity or social behavior imposed by governments or social groups that dominate the society (Bodden, 2005b).

Rap in Indonesia reached popularity in the early 1990s through rappers such as Iwa K. and Denada. The popularity of the genre encouraged the emergence of rap singers and music groups in various areas with local identities such as language, tunes, lyrics, and style of dress. Local identity was combined with themes that contain social, economic and political conditions in the region of a rapper. In Manggarai rap, Lipooz and some rap groups describe the situation of the society and voiced criticism of the existing conditions as well. Lipooz considers rap as a mean to show

the condition of Manggarai community in the midst of change (Allin, 2012c).

The entry of rap music to Manggarai can not be separated from the role of the global music industry in cooperation with local music company. This global music power caused local musicians contestation through reterritorialization which is involved local elements and marketing strategies in the local spaces. This article discusses two important things in the context of contestation between the global and the local in Manggarai rap namely: why do the contestation between the global and the local occur in Manggarai rap? And what are the global and local strategies in the dispute?

### **Methodology**

To answer the research questions above it uses transnational American Studies approach, which is a concept to see America from the perspective of peoples outside the United States that gives two-way interaction. This view change the concept of American Mind focusing on American experience within its own borders into Hemispheric Mind, the views on the US from other nations, as well as American influence on countries bordering with it (Fisher, 2006; Fishkin, 2005; Rowe, 2010 ; 2012). One of it is the influence of American cultural products in the perspective of nations outside the United States.

To see the conflict between global influence and local power analysis is conducted by the concept of landscapes proposed by Arjun Appadurai (1996; 2006; Wise, 2008). Appadurai's theory is effective to analyze the dynamics of contestation between the global and the

local through mediascape which is part of technoscape and driven by the financescape of multinational corporations. The entry of popular culture products brings new ideoscape to the local sphere, while the strength of the local etnoscape tries to contests against new ideoscape through cultural reterritorialization. Lull's concept (1995) on cultural reterritorialization affirms that the culture is continuously reshaped by social interaction, creative forms of personal communication, technology and the mass media, so that the product of that culture loses its original form as a result of a new interpretation and understanding of the local context.

This study is a qualitative research, a study which was based on the interpretation of everything seen, heard, and understood by the researcher (Creswell, 2012). To make an interpretation it uses thick description methods which is raised by Pontoretto, namely 'thick interpretation' of social actions which is undertaken by the object so that it can provide a 'thick meaning' to reach an understanding and at the same time inner situation of the readers (Pontoretto, 2006). The data in this study come from three sources, namely literature study, observation, and interviews.

Literature data are in the form of audiovisual such as DVD / VCD, internet sites (ReverbNation and youtube), and MP3 as well as literature such as books, journals, newspapers, and magazines. Observations carried out on radio, television, video clips and direct music events (live performance). While interviews were obtained from informants consists of rappers, radio broadcasters, members of the rap community, and

students who are members of some art studios.

## **Discussion**

The emergence of rap is inseparable from a variety of socio-cultural conditions that occur in major American cities. Among the various Afro-American residential areas across the country, Bronx was famous as the worst slums in the United States (Price III, 2006). In addition to the social, political conditions in mid-1960-1970-an also affect the domestic condition of United States. Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union led the American's conscription, including African-Americans who are fighting for equal rights, to various countries. Emmett G. Price III (2006) describes the position of Afro-American community as people who do not have full legal rights as citizens, but were obliged to defend the country in the name of the applicable law. These conditions aroused various movements, including The Black Art Movement, a movement spearheaded by young Afro-Americans to express their views through various forms of creative activities that teaches the art in the perspective of blacks.

In terms of its history, rap music originated from the activities carried out by Clive Campbell who was then known as DJ Kool Here in the 1970s in various block party (Price III, 2006). They play the music that relied on the creation of rhythm by using two turntables containing pieces of music which is taken from songs that were famous in that time. Themes of rap songs that depict the realities of city life in the form of street violence, crime, racial discrimination, poverty, and drug use, have

drawn criticism from the mainstream music industry and society. The use of vulgar language and expression of black youth resistance against authorities led to negative reaction from many people, but the controversies made rap genre as a global phenomenon in the late 20th century (Bennett, 2001).

In the concept of Appadurai (1996; 2006; Wise, 2008), the inclusion of hip hop elements through films such as "Wild Style" or "Flashdance" in the 1990s to various countries through the power of Mediascape in the form of radio, television, and cinema sparked interest in other elements. The adoption of the hip hop culture by the Youth led to an influx of new ideoscape in the realm of their ethnoscape. The entry of new ideoscape caused contestation between local ethnoscape with Afro-American ethnoscape inserted by international corporations as owners of capital or financialscape. The process of distribution and promotion through Mediascape was inseparable from the network of international corporations that has given the flexibility to work with the national corporations by local government (Sen & Hill, 2007; Sen & Hill, 2007). The process of deployment and distribution of pop culture products occur because of the power of technology (technoscape) driven by the financial ability of the industrialists.

Nonetheless, according to the theory of hegemony of Hall in Storey (2012), viewers or consumers of cultural products has its own perception of the products of culture that are shown. Different perceptions arise from different ethnic backgrounds and collective experience. Hip hop ideology which is a product of the collective experience of Afro-American

community then co-opted by corporate of international music deals with local ideoscape. In this encounter the appropriation process occurred so ideoscape of American rap adapted to local ideoscape.

Based on the concept of pull and push in the hip hop culture (Motley & Henderson, 2008; Trapp, 2005), push factors in local hip hop is the strength of technoscape and financialscape to market new music by using Mediascape as agents such as radio, television, and cinemas. The ideology (ideoscape) of resistance and freedoms within the spirit of hip hop then transformed in accordance with idioscape and ethnoscape of the receiver. This transformation occurred because of the perceptions of rap in each country is different.

Pull factors in local hip hop are local themes, language, and samples of local music. These elements are used to attract music consumers in the region. Means for local rapper to distribute cultural products is a community network, distro stores, local radio, social events, and art festivals.

The concept of push and pull in rap music appears in the contextualization of rap authenticity by the rapper in each region. American rap's contextualization to local conditions occurs in various elements. Contextualization of musical styles presented by Jogja Hip Hop Foundation of Yogyakarta (Bonaventura, 2013) by incorporating elements of Javanese music, Sundanis of Bandung incorporate elements of Sundanese music (Adhityo, 2012), the Turkish rappers incorporate traditional songs in local samples of his music (Solomon, 2005a; Solomon, 2005b), hip hop in Kenya coast uses samples of Arabic

music and Lebanon because the roots of Arab culture which comes from their parents (Eisenberg, 2012), and Desi rap of South Asia includes elements of Baghra music as part of the music (Bennett, 2001).

Rap songs began to be known by Ruteng's community through radio (Randu, 2015; Sandre, 2012). The song "Ruteng is da City" created by Lipooz became famous and favored by youth. The song was also the beginning of the movement of hip hop in Ruteng in particular and Manggarai in general. Lipooz as a role figure who popularized rap music Manggarai recognized by other rappers. Just like in any other region in the world and Indonesia (Androutsopoulos & Scholz, 2003; Bennett 2004; Bodden, 2005a; Condry, 2007; Eisenberg, 2012; Hellenon 2006; Hutnyk, 2006; Liu, 2010), the interest of young people in Manggarai on rap music emerged because it has a different format than previously existing music and synonymous with music for young people (Platoz, 2015; Radu, 2015; Sandre, 2012; Tribe, 2015; V-Lee, 2015).

Contestation between the global and the local is located on each element of rap. Essential element in rap is music. The use of samples in rap music gives leeway to the musicians to combine a wide variety of music into a new composition. At this level, various types of music that have existed in Manggarai music spaces become references and influence the composition of rap created by the rapper. Selection of the music based on various considerations, among others: the artist's perception of the tastes of consumers, the trend of global music, or the background of the musicians.

Considerate of consumer tastes led some Manggarai rappers to mix various types of

music. The passion of Manggarai youth to dance caused the choice of samples adapted to the rhythm suitable for dancing. Nevertheless they do not include certain types of music that comes from outside the region dominantly, due to connectivity with local elements remains a major attraction for local music fans.

Local rap adaptation to the tastes of the local community can not be completely separated from the global conditions. Potash Tribe (2015) find that rap music remains subject to the "tastes of the market," locality that is displayed can not be separated from the construction of musical trends created by the mainstream entertainment industry. "Tastes of the market" or "tastes of the industry" led to the selection of music as a sample of the songs are not set to a specific genres, even though the selection is still on the music that has roots of Afro-American as jazz, Rhythm and Blues, and new-school rap which is more popularly known as West Coast rap. Negotiations of public taste and global trends appeared in theme, language and local dialects.

Negotiations between the global and the local are also shown with the use of the name of the site by any rappers. Based on the opinion of MC Firman, the utterance of a location appears in the name of the group and at the beginning of the song when rappers introduce themselves (Firman, 2015). For listeners of Manggarai district, the utterance of a person's location is part of their cultural identity as it concerns distinctions of various regions in Manggarai in dialect, way of life, and its history as a result of geopolitical construction in the region.

Contestation between the global and the local in Manggarai rap also appear in rap's

lyrics and titles. Most Manggarai rap songs use of English in whole or part of its title, but using Indonesian and Manggarai in the lyrics. The use of English in its titles is a global influence, while the lyrics that use Indonesian or local language as an effort to attract local communities to the song. Manggarai rap songs that use this method are: "Hip Cha Cha" by Lipooz, "Boleng My Place" by Vian Mahon, and "I'm a Bad Boy" by Potazz.

Contestation between local and global music in Manggarai rap not only in the format of the music and the lyrics, but also in aspects of production and distribution. Strategies undertaken by the global power of music among others are using television, radio, and print media to market the products of the music. Local radio stations in Manggarai accept advertising to play specific songs on the demand of music producer. The broadcast of advertising of some products that do not relate to the music shows but using icon of singers indirectly made a promotion for the singer's songs. Some health products, sports, soft drinks, often use a music star as icon of ads.

One example of the entry of the global music industry to the local area was sales of ring back tone (RBT) of Lipooz songs by the provider of telecommunications services in one of the musical events in Manggarai. Sales of music by local artists by national companies, according to Keith Negus (2004) may be a step of cooptation of the global music industry to the local artists who have the potential for raising the profit of the company. Cooptation also occurs in an independent company that use the power of the mainstream music industry's distribution system as happened in the United States.

The efforts to contest against the entry of global rap into Manggarai rap spaces, performed by a variety of strategies such as: community performances by local rapper. Some of the rap community like MBC (Manggarai Barat Community) has held two events, namely Rap Party Part 1 and Part 2, in 2010 and 2012 for fans of rap in West Manggarai. This event is also open to groups or solo rappers across the Manggarai region. Similar events were held by Rappublic Ruteng Clan in the region of Ruteng as well. By cooperating with educational institutions such as colleges and schools, they held performances of local music on special occasions such as the anniversary of the school or certain occasions.

Another strategy is to raise issues that are prominent and popular in the community such as Sail Komodo 2014, which makes Komodo Island as a world tourist destination. This national program is used by the rapper of West Manggarai to create a song that contains places of tourist destinations in West Manggarai like in "Labuan Bajo" by MC Firman, and "Tanahku Labuan Bajo" by the rap group Boyz of West Manggarai. In addition they also invite the community to succeed tourism programs in the area of West Manggarai in a way to preserve the flora and fauna in the region such as found in the song "Naring Cama Ora Komodo" by Z\_Lo MBC.

Thirdly, some Manggarai rap groups using a specific figure as the icon for the song. The icon becomes a bond of unity and solidarity as fellow Manggarai. Icon of some Manggarai rap songs is Motang Rua, a local hero who fought against colonial rule in the late 19th century. Respect for

Motang Rua in the lyrics of Manggarai rap songs Manggarai was not only to gain popularity, but also as an honor of the heroes and their predecessors. Respect for Motang Rua contained in songs like "Flores Sound" by Lipooz and "Attack of Motang Ruap" by Irwan To'oz.

### Conclusion

The influx of Western music into Indonesia had an impact on local music. Western music which is supported by international music corporation oust the local music that is close to the reality of people's lives. The dynamics of foreign music in Indonesia can not be separated from the social, economic, and political as well as policies that are run by the authorities. As a product of pop culture rap music in Indonesia still has influence in voicing social, economic, political and experienced people.

The entry of rap to Manggarai led the contestation between local and global music in the Manggarai music spaces. Global forces represented by rap music that came from abroad or the mainstream music industry which use the mass media to spread their products, while the local rap music is rap music produced by the rapper of Manggarai using an independent production system. Global and local contestation was also present in the local rap through the use of foreign languages in the title and lyrics, as well as the use of slang that comes from American rap.

There are several strategies undertaken in the contestation that include: using the format of rap global but using local content, encouraging people to know their music by performing a show at the local level, market their products use the indie community network, and raised local

issues which attracted audience's attention. Rap global strategies carried out mass media, direct promotion by using non-music products, and sales of local rap music ring back tones. Contestation of both runs continuously in Manggarai music spaces and transformed in accordance with the development of local communities.

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